DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 166 935 SO 011 595

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TITLE A Materialist Theory of Women's Status.
PUB DATE [78]
NOTE 30p.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Capitalism; Change Agents; *Change Strategies; Changing Attitudes; Child Care; Child Rearing; *Cultural Factors; Family Structure; *Females; Feminism; Futures (of Society); Males; *Negative Attitudes; Parent Child Relationship; Power Structure; Productivity; Psychological Patterns; Reproduction (Biology); Sex Role; Sex Stereotypes; *Social Factors; Socialization; Social Values

ABSTRACT

The paper examines three factors--reproduction, production, and psychodynamics--which contribute to maintaining an inferior image of women in a capitalistic society. It also offers suggestions for changing these social structures so that they will not relegate women to inferior social status. In a capitalistic society production is based on commodities, which are defined as objects which have exchange value in the market place. Although the position of women as nurturers is highly valued socially, women do not gain the esteem and power which comes from the world of commodities. Also, the social organization of capitalism reinforces the division between nurturance (female) and authority (male). In addition, the tasks of reproduction and socialization of children also divide women and men into tasks of nurturance and authority. This duality is then reflected in the work which women do outside the home. When women display behavior inappropriate to their roles as nurturing females, they threaten the central elements of social organization. Finally, psychodynamics, the interaction of one's biological and mental life, is also gender differentiated; we do not learn that we are a person with a variety of attributes, one of which is gender, but that we are either male or female. Thus, feminist demands must go beyond equal pay for equal work, equal opportunity, and affirmative action which do not address the psychological resistance to changes in women's status. Rather, a future must be structured in which feminist values are fully integrated into social relations and institutions. (Author/KC)

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A Materialist Theory of Women's Status

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SO 011 595

The origins of the inferior status of women will probably never be known. Whether or not sexual asymmetry has always existed is a much disputed subject (Lamphere, 1977). Useful evidence is scanty and subject to a variety of interpretations which depend as much on politics and wishes as on compelling proof. No non-patriarchal society currently exists which could serve as a test case for hypotheses. Biology, including our primate heritage (Rossi, 1977; Draper, 1975; Leibowitz, 1975; Dinnerstein, 1976); the emergence of private property and class relations (Engels, 1972; Sacks, 1975); rape and violence (Brownmiller, 1975); innate male aggression (Firestone, 1970); kinship systems and the incest taboo (Freud, 1961; Levi-Strauss, 1956); and the desire to control nature and the reproduction of children (Rich, 1976; Horkheimer and Adorno, 1972) have all been offered as possible explanations.

Rather than discuss origins, I will analyze how inferiority is maintained, whatever its original sources may have been. I will not offer proof here that the domination of women by men has been a consistent feature of human history as this has been demonstrated in depressing detail elsewhere (Ortner, 1974; Mead, 1974; Gornick, 1971; Rosaldo, 1974; Figes, 1970). This pattern of unequal distribution of resources, esteem and access to sources of social power and control can be called patriarchy, although writers differ in their use of the term (G. Rubin, 1975; Hartmann, 1976).

Women's inferior status is rooted materially in the organization of human life and activity. It is not a question of "bad attitudes" which will be overcome by consciousness raising, although this may help. There are three interacting spheres of life that are crucial for all human beings: production, reproduction and psychodynamics. These spheres are structured for and experienced differently by women and men. The material basis of women's oppression is particular forms of social organization which vary over time. These varying forms are in turn a response to the material necessities faced by humans as a species which must always be met in some fashion. There is no conclusive evidence that these necessities must always be met in a patriarchal manner (Maccobby and Jacklin, 1974). The very fact that they are socially created means that they are subject to social transformation, within the limits of environmental resources.

Production

As a species we are faced with the problem of building environments in which we can survive. We need to produce food, clothing and shelter for ourselves. Even people who live on tropical islands with abundant resources have to organize the gathering, processing and distribution of those resources. There is a tremendous variation in productive systems among cultures, but all cultures seem to have gender differentiated divisions of labor (Mead, 1974; Levi-Strauss, 1956).

We live in a capitalist society which affects women in historically specific ways. While patriarchy preceded capitalism, it has been reinforced by it in a number of ways. First, there is the division between use value and exchange value which is critical to the economic organization of capitalism (Marx, 1967; Mandel, 1970). While every object or service to be exchanged must have use value in order for it to be desired by another person, not every use value is transformed into a commodity which is exchanged for others in the market. All commodities must have both use and exchange value. There is a crucial social difference between a tailor who produces a coat for his/her immediate use and one who produces a coat to exchange for other commodities or money which is the medium of exchange.

The act of production changes its meaning because it takes place within a specific sort of social context: all work under capitalism is transformed from the production of objects for use to the production of commodities--objects whose purpose is to be exchanged for other commodities in the market. It makes no difference if X produces coats, calendars, or cold cream, his/her purpose is to gain access to the exchange of commodities, that is, to the market. If a person's activity is not within this network of exchange, it has no value from the capitalist point of view. The person who does not produce commodities has no means of entrance into the market, for she has nothing (no commodities) to exchange.

The relevance for women of the dominance of commodity exchange is that it reinforces on an economic level the devaluation of women's activity. In many ways, women's work remains within a precapitalist framework. Even though they work outside the home in ever increasing numbers, women's primary contribution is still considered to be their supposedly unique functions within the home. The social ideology is that none of this care can or should have a price or be spoiled by contact with market relations outside the home. Women are artisans in an age of mass production (Weinbaum and Bridges, 1978).

The fact that women are the primary childrearers in our society provides the model and produces expectations for other types of work women are allowed to do and for "feminine" ways of relating to men. Women are expected to be nurturant, self-effacing, patient, emotionally expressive, supportive of others, concerned with the welfare of others, and more concerned with concrete immediacy than technical or theoretical activity. Women's authority is expected to derive from caring acts, not from mastery over others. Women may be elementary school teachers but not principals; nurses not doctors; potters or weavers but not painters.

While this form of activity appears to be highly valued socially, once we press beyond the level of ideology, the appearance breaks down. Esteem and power in a capitalist society flow largely from power in and over the market. The more exchange value one controls,

the more power and esteem one is likely to possess. The ability to control the character of the market itself can be as important as direct control of masses of exchange value. For example, the skills of a lobbyist may have high exchange value to a corporation trying to influence a regulatory law.

Women by and large lack these powers. Nor are they encouraged to develop them. Furthermore, the very quality prized in their activities --personalized attention--is antithetical to the production of commodities for the market. Commodities are not valued for their intrinsic character, but rather for what they can be exchanged for and how readily they may be exchanged for a profit. Thus, although social ideology may express admiration for women's work, the impersonal workings of the market system undercut, in fact falsify, this ideology. Housewives, for example, are neither considered part of the labor force, nor are their products and services counted as contributions to the Gross National Product (Griffiths, 1976). Furthermore, as any woman who has tried to "reenter" the labor force can attest, experience at home is not easily translated into the type of work experience for which employers give credit. Nor does housework qualify one for social security or a pension. If a domestic crisis develops, one must take unpaid time off "from work" to handle it.

Thus, the division between the world of the market and the home and the dominance of the commodity form reinforces and provides a

social-economic base for the pre-existing devaluation of women. As almost all production of goods now takes place outside of the family and as the family becomes more and more the center of consumption, nurturance and socialization, the contradictions between ideology and reality will intensify. At the same time, the social organization of capitalism reinforces the division between nurturance (female) and authority (male) experienced both within the patriarchal family and in the public world. As work is transformed into the production of objects for exchange it takes on the characteristics of large-scale commodity production--impersonality, fragmentation, "rationality," instrumental relations between workers, and competition for the more scarce power positions (Weber, 1947; Braverman, 1974). Many of these characteristics are exaggerations of patriarchal male role expectations. Since men also control the world of work, it is seen as the male sphere. Anyone who wishes to succeed in work is expected to take on these characteristics.

The expectations and experiences of nurturance, individual attention, and sensual gratification characteristic of childhood and, to a lesser extent, of adult personal life, are excluded from work. At the same time, because of its instrumental character, work is appealing as an escape from the powerless intensity of childhood and its reverberations in adult life. This dual nature of work has several consequences for women: it puts more pressure on them as the

source of nurturance to maintain the family as the sphere of warmth in opposition to work, and it requires women to become like men if they wish to succeed outside the home, increasing their ambivalence towards establishing a career. It increases men's resistance to women's entrance into the world of work, since work is an escape from their ties to the mother who provided nurturance. Women at work, especially in positions of authority, are a reminder of all that has to be given up and rejected as the price of escape from childhood. Women can reduce this resistance by taking on "women's work" or a supportive rather than authoritative position within a man's field, but often at the expense of success in that field. In fact, the contemporary labor market displays both stratification by gender (Hartmann, 1976; Blau, 1975) and large differences in wages between women and men, even when controlling for major occupational groups (Blau, 1975; Griffiths, 1976).

Women's wages can be kept low in part because of the gender stratified labor market. There is strong competition for a limited range of occupations. Women experience themselves as economically marginal because many occupations available to them require low skill levels. They know they can be easily replaced. Such positions often lack possibilities for advancement. The skills required are frequently extensions of sex-typed behavior; for example, a "pleasant personality" is a requirement for many secretarial positions. This congruence of sex-typed behavior and skills reinforces women's feelings

that they are not really workers and decreases militancy for economic changes.

A gender stratified labor force is functional for a capitalist system. Women serve as a reserve pool of workers for the labor force (Ferber and Lowry, 1976). They can be moved in and out of paid work as needed and will offer less resistance to displacement than men, since their "real job" is at home. This use of women also masks the real level of unemployment, since housewives, whether voluntary or involuntary, are not included in the labor force. Such stratification also reduces competition for scarce positions, usually the most prestigious, and disguises the degree of inequality present, since women are considered to be in their "proper" place. This exclusion in turn is a motive for men to resist affirmative action. Their privileged access to such positions would end.

Reproduction

Reproduction involves not only the actual physical reproduction of the species but also the transformation of the relatively unformed neonate into a well-behaved member of society. Every society needs to acculturate its young, passing on the behaviors, values, beliefs, and attitudes appropriate to the culture. The acculturation process may take many forms and be carried out by a variety of agencies, depending on the culture. In our society, the acculturation process is shared by a variety of structures: first the family and later the

schools, mass media, peer groups, and sometimes religion. The state affects the process also, both directly, for example, by inculcating patriotism, and indirectly through the impact of educational, legal and economic decisions on other structures such as the family.

Reproduction is differentiated by gender. Women have different tasks in acculturating children than men. In general, women are the nurturers, men are the authority figures. Mothers are expected in our society, for example, to unselfishly nurture their children, to structure their immediate environment, to tend to their physical and emotional needs (Winnicott, 1964; Freiberg, 1977; Mahler, 1975). Fathers represent the values and activity of the outside world and are seen to "enrich" the child's experience precisely because of their more outside and formal role.

This split between nurturance and authority is reflected in the work women do outside the home as well. In our society, for example, women usually have the most direct contact with people in need of services while men retain control of the institutions and the terms of care. Men are physicians; women are nurses. As the proportion of intellectual training to care increases or as the profession becomes more technical, men tend to dominate the profession. For example, most elementary school teachers are female, most college teachers male.

Expected behavior is also differentiated on the basis of gender. Behavior appropriate to women tends to reflect their closeness to

children and the mothering role. Women are considered more emotional (Ortner, 1974), physical, susceptible to the body and disease (Gordon, 1976; Ehrenreich and English, 1973). Men are more rational, instrumentally oriented, aggressive. Women are associated with the world of the family, with the private sphere, men with the public world of work and politics (Rosaldo, 1974; Sanday, 1974). Tendencies in the gender-appropriate direction are encouraged, inappropriate interests discouraged.

Socialization not only insures that the next generation will replicate the same gender differentiated system, but it also is one of the primary roots of male-female dependence (Dinnerstein, 1976; Levi-Strauss, 1956). Men and women need each other to feel whole, since each are allowed to possess only some of the total range of possible human feelings and skills. This dependency also insures the replication of heterosexuality and the family. When women display non-gender appropriate behavior, they are not only threatening men's privileged access to certain jobs but also one of the central elements of social organization itself. We can thus understand why anti-feminists perceive feminism as a threat both to the family and to society as it currently exists.

Distinctions between public and private which are presently modeled on male-female role differentiation are politically important as well. They define not only who is allowed to participate in the public realm, but what sorts of demands on the state and actions by the state are considered appropriate. One of the frequent responses

to feminist demands for child care is that it would infringe on the rights of the family. Underlying this response, among other factors, is an implicit notion of the public and the private.

The sphere of reproduction includes therefore not only general acculturation into socially shared values and role expectations but the replication of gender-differentiated and gender-associated values, institutions, behaviors and beliefs. This differentiation is reinforced by the character of capitalism, especially the dominance of exchange value and instrumental behavior. Within the home women experience ever more pressure to socialize their children, sons especially, for capitalistic forms of achievement, thus insuring an ever greater and more intense rejection of themselves by their sons precisely as the sons are successfully socialized to be male, that is, not like mother. The son's repression of the female within himself and his resentment of women must intensify correspondingly. As the father is depleted by the demands of his job and as the characteristics of his work diverge more and more from that of his wife, he is less likely to be able to nurture her or his children (L.B. Rubin, 1976). Even more of the work of nurturance falls to the mother, thus reinforcing the patriarchal system and intensifying its impact on both boy and girl children.

Psychodynamics

Human beings have not only biological and instinctual drives but ideas associated with these drives (Freud, 1962 and 1965; Winnicott,

1964). Our internal life is quite complex and rich. Psychodynamics is the sphere where our biology and mental life interact. Every society imposes controls and limitations on the manifestations of this sphere and channels psychic energy in "appropriate" directions (Marcuse, 1955; Freud, 1961; G. Rubin, 1975).

One of the most important aspects of this sphere, especially for feminist analysis, is sexuality. While cultures vary tremendously in the range and degree of sexual activity they consider permissible, two general tendencies seem prevalent: the enforcing of heterosexuality and the organization of sexuality according to gender (G. Rubin, 1975). Humans are originally polymorphous (Freud, 1949;and 1962; Winnicott, 1964; Mahler, 1975).

Erotic pleasure is gained from a wide range of experience, not only between the child and other persons but between the child and physical objects and functions, for example, eating and defecation. Yet eventually most persons become heterosexual, genitally-oriented relatively monogamous adults. This is an achievement of culture, not of biology (Salzman, 1973; Money and Ehrhardt, 1972; Stoller, 1973).

Psychodynamics is gender-differentiated and gender-stratified. Not only do we learn the meaning of biology and anatomical differences through social interaction but we learn that one gender, male, is more valued than the other gender, female. Under patriarchy, these discoveries are inextricably linked. Gender is the first form

of social differentiation. Even separation-individualism is played out within gender since usually only the mother is present in the infant's world. This fact has tremendous consequences for human development (Dinnerstein, 1976). We have to learn that we are not a person, with a variety of attributes including gender, but a male or female person. Gender becomes a part of who we are as individuals on the most deep, unconscious level. This would perhaps not be harmful, could even be quite positive, if gender did not also carry with it such strong associations of superiority and inferiority.

Patriarchy, however, presents persons with a rigid sex-gender system which, on an individual level, is mastered primarily by incorporation within one's psyche. Maturation under a patriarchal system, means initiation into, as Freud put it, the "great mystery" of the differentiation of the sexes. Why persons should be primarily differentiated on the basis of gender, as opposed to skills, interests, etc., is an opaque mystery to children (and not only to them). Many distinctions, privileges and prohibitions seem arbitrary. The entire world of persons and experiences is split into male and female, although the actual work that men and women do (excluding childrearing) varies widely from culture to culture.

Inherent in patriarchy is not only gender as the original mode of social differentiation, but the unequal evaluation of the male and female spheres. Whatever women do is ultimately of less value than

men, no matter what their activities might be. This devaluation may not be immediately apparent, since sometimes it is masked by an unrealistic idealization of women. There may be an ideology, which idolizes women precisely inasmuch as they deviate from female stereotypes. Thus, in the Virgin Mary cult, for example, Mary is worshipped because she does not participate in the sources of female evil--sexuality above all. Or women may be idolized for being weak, frail, modest, etc., the opposite of the feared, all-powerful mother. Or as in contemporary counter-culture, women may be valued for their "earth mother" attributes, as long as they do not partake of the calculating rationality which is the source of men's power. What is lacking in all these cases is a realistic acceptance of the worth of women as persons, and persons with various interests, skills, personalities, etc.

Both the organization of the world on the basis of gender and the devaluation of women are social products and part of becoming a person entails internalizing these norms as part of one's own personality and identity. The all pervasive sex-gender system operates within each of us as a powerful, unconscious, individually-experienced force. It is so much a part of each of us that it seems "natural," not even open to question or analysis. The consequence for women is that in becoming a (female) person, each woman incorporates into her very being a sense of inferiority, of incompleteness and inadequacy, as well as a sense of distrust and fear of her own

repressed power (Lerner, 1974). Anatomy becomes destiny as long as the social world is organized according to one overriding criterion: who has a penis and who does not. It is the social division of power which ultimately endows the phallus with such magical powers (Salzman, 1973; Moulton, 1973; Fromm-Reichman, 1959).

Homophobia, an indispensible element of patriarchy, has special importance for women. The original loved object, of both girls and boys, is a woman, since women almost universally have the primary responsibility for childrearing. In the process of separation, the girl must reject the mother (Mahler, 1975); yet unlike the boy, she receives no promise of another mother (wife) later on. The girl's early development is played out with someone of her own gender, making boundaries and separation much less clear (Chodorow, 1974; Flax, 1978).

The girl must shift her libido to another gender as well as repress her erotic feelings towards her own mother. In addition, there are the often-noted problems of her resentment towards the mother for failing to provide her with a penis (Mahler, 1975). A penis is not only valued for its physical qualities--ease of manipulation, externality, visibility--but also because it is a means of access to the mother and to power. Under patriarchy, the girl cannot identify with the father completely, or use identification with him to separate from the mother, since so much of life is gender-stratified and differentiated. The girl is likely to be left with an ambivalent tie to her mother and conflicted feelings about being female (Lerner, 1974; Bibring, 1975). This ambivalence and sense of inferiority may

later be played out in work, in, for example, the difficulty women sometimes have in taking themselves seriously as workers or making demands for better conditions, and in relations with other women where envy, competitiveness, and an inability to enjoy close relations with other women often alternate with unrealistic desires to be "mothered" by them (Cohen, 1973; Hoffman, 1975, Flax, 1978).

The internalized sense of gender provides an unconscious support for the inequalities found in the external world and a motive for not resisting these inequalities. However, the positive aspects of mothering and femininity if truly valued, could be a basis of resistance to patriarchy. Anti-feminists often claim to be the defenders of the womanly virtues. This is a source of much of their appeal. However, the price they demand for appreciation is adhering to rigid sex-stereotyped behavior; being mommy's "good girl" again. In this demand, anti-feminists reflect the "either-or" of gender identity which is a fundamental aspect of patriarchy and hence participate in the actual devaluation of women.

Since men's identities too are built upon gender differentiation, it is not surprising that they often experience feminism as a personal affront to themselves, that is, to their masculinity. Their identity is based on being not female, a sense that is ultimately rooted in the early separation experiences of infancy (Zilboorg, 1973; Horney, 1967; Chodorow, 1974). Feminism threatens this often painfully

achieved sense of self and threatens, unconsciously, to throw men back into the power of the loved and feared infantile mother.

Anti-feminists associate feminism with lesbianism in part because its stress on the ties between women reawakens unconsciously the forbidden libidinal feelings towards the mother and calls into question the need for a gender shift in affections. This in turn threatens men's sexual access to and control over women. Patriarchy is after all in the most literal sense the rule of the father. To some extent, his authority is in the interests of both men and women. Men identify with the power of the father as a means of repressing the mother (female) inside them. Women can partially separate from the mother, but they never have to be completely autonomous and responsible as long as they remain daddy's (or their husband's) little girl (Dinnerstein, 1976). Lesbianism and feminism both reject the power and the control of the father. Thus there is some truth in the anti-feminists charge, but it is not a truth for which feminism should be ashamed or deny.

STEPS TO A FEMINIST UTOPIA

If the theory outlined above is correct, then in order for women's inferior status to be overcome, material life will have to be radically transformed despite the deep-rooted resistance to such change. Without a radical transformation, the sources of oppression may just shift from sphere to sphere (Rowbotham, 1974; Scott, 1974).

Power relations are so deeply entrenched that when one structure becomes less significant, others will take its place. For example, although increasing numbers of women, including women with children, enter the labor force, no other feminist demands such as adequate child care seem to be met. Perhaps the most compelling example is in socialist countries where women work two full-time jobs--care of the home and "outside" employment (Scott, 1974; Lapidus, 1976). Even reforms must be undertaken with a sense of the deep levels of resistance to them--as is demonstrated, for example, in the difficulties in passing the ERA.

Feminist demands in relation to work must go beyond "equal pay for equal work," "equal opportunity" and even affirmative action. Equal pay for equal work would not remedy the gender-stratified character of the labor market. Equal opportunity has two major shortcomings as a feminist demand: it does not deal with the limited range of opportunities available or with the larger context of most women's lives. Since work is hierarchically structured, in terms of pay, social esteem and power, there are relatively few top level jobs available. If this remains true, women will compete with other disadvantaged groups, especially blacks, for these positions. This situation is unfortunate inasmuch as one group's advance should not come at the expense of another's, especially a natural ally. Furthermore, it puts black women in an intolerably conflicted situation. Working class women also will remain wary of the women's liberation movement

since by and large they have a clearer sense of the structural limits to opportunity than middle class women (L.B. Rubin, 1976; Seifer, 1976). They, like many black women and men, will continue to see women's liberation as a vehicle for white middle class women to gain more privilege, necessarily at the expense of others. This isolation in turn weakens the women's movement in terms of its ability to achieve legitimacy and concessions from those in power.

If equal opportunity remains equal access within the system, women will seem to have only themselves to blame if they do not advance. Structural limits will remain hidden. The tendency to self-blame already present in women and other disadvantaged groups (Sennett and Cobb, 1972; L.B. Rubin, 1976) will intensify. Furthermore, equal opportunity is too abstract. It takes women out of the context of their total lives and in this way replicates the public/private, work/home split that is a source of women's oppression. If the division of household labor remains unchanged, women will still have primary responsiblity for childcare and home maintenance. These demands leave her unequal to her male coworkers in free energy and time (Boulding, 1976). No women should have to be "superwomen" in order to be equal with men. Men who wish to share household tasks also have to face the possibility of achieving less in their careers.

The demand for equal opportunity or affirmative action to achieve equal opportunity does not address the psychological sources of the resistance to changes in women's status on the part of both women

and men. It also neglects some of what is potentially most liberatory about feminism itself. The demand for equal opportunity implies acquiesence to the current rules of procedure and behavior. These rules have been sources of the maintenance of women's oppression and do not allow for less competitive, more nurturing work relations.

A feminist restructuring of work would require: 1) a re-definition of what counts as socially useful labor; 2) a re-organization of work relations themselves; 3) a redistribution of socially necessary work; 4) breaking down the division between public and private. The work traditionally done by women--caring for people and interpersonal relationships, beautifying personal environments, raising children and reproducing daily life--is absolutely essential to the maintenance of any social structure. It must not remain invisible, hidden as purely personal services within the home. It must be shared equally by men and women as part of their obligations as members of society. Otherwise it will remain devalued women's work, whether paid or unpaid. Furthermore, the values associated with such work should permeate all work and replace much of the competitiveness and isolation so prevalent in paid occupations.

In order for this to occur, work cannot be organized according to maximizing profits, but rather according to what will satisfy human needs, both for services and for gratifying work. The quality of work as well as the quality of the product and its profitability would be considered primary. There would no longer be such a split

between what women do in the home and what they do outside. Furthermore, if work relations were more gratifying, pressure would be taken off the family. No longer would people return home from work with a battered and depleted psyche and body which must be repaired and revived for the next day's labor. No longer would one have to cling to intimate relations as the one place one can be "oneself."

If work were reorganized on the basis of what is socially useful, then it would be apparent that childcare is a social as well as personal responsibility. Groups of people would have to decide how this could best be carried out according to their needs and those of the children. It would no longer be women's job to see to the growth and development of children. This shift in responsibility would reduce the anxiety and emotional and financial burdens associated with childrearing and the child abuse partly caused by such anxieties. Furthermore, women would no longer be seen as childrearers and only fit for employment which is an extension of this role. In addition, the guilt and worry women feel about "leaving" their children could be eliminated. If the spheres of work and family were not so differentiated, the sense of functioning in two disparate worlds would disappear. Women could also feel that the childcarers have the interests of the children in mind, for childcare would be considered among the most important forms of social labor and rewarded accordingly. Fathers would have to take responsibility for their children not as a gift to the wife, but because as social members, they too are

responsible to children. The social division of labor between men and women based in part on women as mothers would begin to disappear.

All this requires a breakdown in the division between public and private. In order for increased public responsibility to be liberatory rather than a means of further undesired state intervention and control, the state would have to be truly responsbile to its citizens. Increased responsiveness requires a decentralization of many state functions so they are accessible to citizens. It also requires a rethinking of notions of politics and power. Rather than exerting control or centralizing legitimate force, politics would become an activity centered on achieving the good life, the definition of which would be in constant dispute. If politics were less associated with force and power over others and more associated with the quality of life, women would seem to be more "natural" political participants. The traditional female concerns could be brought into the public arena and politics would become more appealing as an activity. This would be true only if the character of politics itself changes, as demonstrated by the failure of women's suffrage to bring about the changes reformers hoped.

Such restructuring would require fundamental transformations in psychological development and would in turn support and further such transformations. There would have to be a breakdown of the division between nurturance (female) and autonomy and authority (male). In order for this to be possible, childrearing and the control of

sexuality must change. From the first moment of infancy, both males and females must be present in the child's life (Dinnerstein, 1976). The child must also have peers to interact with and consistent, reliable persons other than parents who are significant in its development.

Such active involvement with children can only be freely given when it does not come at the expense of developing other skills and interests. Thus childcare is central to feminism, not so women can go out to work, but for the benefit of children and parents, reducing the "hot house" atmosphere of the isolated nuclear family, and for the creation of persons who do not hate women either consciously or unconsciously (Zilboorg, 1973; Dinnerstein, 1976). This shift in childcare is especially important to the development of women's positive identification with their gender. No longer would female identity development be played out with/against the mother only.

This theory is not meant to dismiss reform or to deny its importance. It is certainly better that women win discrimination cases, the right to abortion and are hired in previously all male fields. However, unless we understand the broader context in which these attempts at reform occur, feminists will neither achieve particular goals nor will they be able to understand and confront the rising anti-feminist backlash. An integrated, powerful, multi-class women's liberation movement will remain a mirage and a feminist future truly a utopia--that is, no place to be found.

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